

## WWII Studies FAQ

### **What kind of degree program is this?**

The WWII Studies MA program is an interdisciplinary program of study. You'll explore the Second World War through a multitude of first-person and scholarly perspectives on the event and its geopolitical and cultural aftermath. This approach capitalizes on the unique expertise at both ASU and the National World War II Museum. The result is a one-of-a-kind degree program that empowers students to draw on a wide range of sources and methodologies while becoming scholars who can speak to a diversity of audiences.

This program operates on a cohort model. There are intrinsic benefits of coming into the program with a cohort and completing most of your courses with the same colleagues. We encourage you to connect with your peers and develop a relationship with them that can go beyond the classroom and our program in general.

All the courses are asynchronous, which means that there are not specified meeting times where you must access the class, and they are hosted on the Canvas Learning Management System. Each course is 7.5 weeks in duration, and we offer courses in Fall A and B Session, Spring A and B Session, and the Summer C Session. For more information about ASU's Academic Calendar, please see <https://students.asu.edu/academic-calendar>.

### **What role does The National WWII Museum play in this program?**

ASU and the National WWII Museum are full partners in this program. We co-developed the curriculum and the content for all of our courses. We constantly meet and consult on courses we offer and those in development. Faculty from the Museum's Institute for the Study of War and Democracy and other departments also teach multiple courses, including Decision Points I and II, the Lived Experience, and electives such as Leadership & Diplomacy. Museum staff including curators, historians, and educators from the Museum's WWII Media and Education Center are also present in the vast majority of the courses we offer, providing lectures and insights and using their vast holdings to enhance our understanding of how the Second World War was waged in Europe as well as the Pacific.

### **What will we learn in our courses?**

The program is built from three blocks of courses. Because we have students from a wide variety of backgrounds, the first block of three courses is devoted to familiarizing all students with the causes and progress of the Second World War, focusing on important developments as well as key decisions made by military and political leaders. The next block of three core courses keeps the Second World War as a central focus, while situating it in a wider lens and more ambitious interdisciplinary footing. These courses provide insight into events and peoples we do not usually associate with the Second World War. They look beyond the field of battle and do so through a variety of approaches including memory studies, oral history, and comparative studies. Finally, our electives put the interdisciplinary nature of this program front and center as students use newly gained knowledge and skills to explore the impact of WWII through film and literature, philosophy, and sites of memory. In order to engage with the courses in the second and third block, you will have to critically analyze and lean on what you learned in

the first three courses and put into conversation your knowledge of battles, weapons, and commanders with the social, cultural, political, and economic realities of the time.

### **What kind of books will we be reading?**

Assigned readings are specific to courses and will change over time. To give you a flavor for some of the texts assigned recently, they include: Evan Mawdsley's *World War II: A New History* (Cambridge, 2009), Mansur Abdulin's *Red Road from Stalingrad* (Pen & Sword Military, 2019), E. B. Sledge's *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* (Presidio Press, 2007), Svetlana Alexievich's *The Unwomanly Face of War: An Oral History of Women in World War II* (Random House, 2017), Kenneth Rose's *Myth and the Greatest Generation* (Routledge, 2007), Emily S. Rosenberg's *A Date Which Will Live: Pearl Harbor in American Memory* (Duke University Press Books, 2005), and Michael Bazylar's *Holocaust, Genocide, and the Law: A Quest for Justice in a Post-Holocaust World* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

### **Are there additional electives I can choose from?**

We consistently offer four electives throughout the academic year and we are continuing to work on new courses that can fulfill our degree requirements. We let our students know whenever an additional elective is in development or will be offered.

### **Outside of coursework, are there additional options for me to learn about the Second World War?**

There are vast resources available digitally through the Museum's website and other digital platforms.

[Museum Website](#): Includes articles, videos, and past distance learning events from historians, curators, and educators from the Museum as well as renowned WWII scholars from around the globe, including Alexandra Ritchie, Richard Frank, Ian Toll, and more.

[The National WWII Museum Digital Collections](#): Offers thousands of hours of oral histories and tens of thousands of photographs, with new collections being added monthly. Researchers can browse by key topics, view timelines and interactive maps, and students are welcome to use any content they wish in their coursework.

[Livestream.com Speakers Archive](#): Includes all lectures, panels, exhibit openings, and author events that have been broadcast from the Museum since 2012.

[Museum YouTube Channel](#): Includes past lectures, recorded webinars, short form documentaries, educational videos, and artifact spotlights from the Museum's galleries and vault.

[Podcast Series](#): There are two podcasts currently available from the Museum. The first, *Service on Celluloid* which ended its run this past April, analyzes depictions of World War II on film. Each full episode is accompanied by a minisode that delves into the real story from the film using oral histories from the Museum's collection. Second, *"To the Best of My Ability"* focuses on the Truman administration, the final months of WWII, and the immediate postwar years.

Additionally, within the MA program, we have started a speaker series with renowned scholars working on the Second World War that we record and post exclusively for current students.

The National WWII Museum in partnership with ASU also offers a [Continuing Education program](#) that currently costs \$299 per course and features 4-week module classes that you are able to engage with at a leisurely pace as they involve minimal assignments, unlike the WWII

Studies MA program. Currently, courses that have been developed include: Stories of the Pacific, D-Day, Myths and Legends of World War II: Blitzkrieg, and the 75th Anniversary of the End of WWII in a Global Perspective.

### **What can I do with a World War II Studies degree?**

This interdisciplinary degree in the humanities will equip students with a broad range of skills that give graduates a foundation in how they can discuss the Second World War through a variety of lenses. The knowledge and skills associated with such study are transferable to a variety of contexts, including education, military service, human rights work, public relations, diplomacy, international relations, law, and further graduate studies.

### **Who can I turn to if I have questions or concerns after entering the program?**

We have a dedicated Program Lead, Dr. Yan Mann, who can assist with programmatic questions, issues concerning the nature and scope of the program, and feedback on courses, as well as the general development and delivery of the WWII Studies program. We also have a dedicated Academic Success Advisor, Dr. Kathy O'Malley, who is available to assist students with program information, course sequence, and ASU policies and procedures.